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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 59/196, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-first session a report on the state of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights. The report was submitted in October 2006 (A/61/513). Subsequent developments relating to the establishment of regional offices by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights were reported on in due course in the report of the High Commissioner and the follow-up to the World Conference on Human Rights submitted to the Human Rights Council at its fourth session. Additional relevant information was included in the report of the Secretary-General on the status of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Asia and Pacific region, also submitted to the Council at its fourth session.

2. In resolution 6/20, the Human Rights Council requested the High Commissioner to "convene in 2008 a workshop for an exchange of views on good practices, added value and challenges for such regional arrangements". The resolution was sponsored by Armenia, Belgium, Mexico and Senegal. The aim of the workshop will be to demonstrate good practices in the work of regional arrangements, to strengthen cooperation among regional human rights mechanisms and to promote greater cooperation between regional mechanisms and the Human Rights Council.

3. The Office of the High Commissioner has consulted closely with Belgium, which has generously provided additional funding to ensure broad participation of stakeholders, and is now finalizing the arrangements for the workshop, to be held in Geneva on 24 and 25 November. In accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 6/20, an invitation to participate in the workshop will be extended to representatives of regional and subregional arrangements from various regions,

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experts, all interested United Nations Member States, observers, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations.

4. In accordance with the resolution, a summary of the workshop, including recommendations for greater cooperation among regional mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights and the Human Rights Council, will be submitted to the Council in accordance with its programme of work. Therefore, a full report on the state of regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights does not appear necessary at this stage.